

# 2008-2027 Washington State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan

June 2008



## What are the requirements for the Plan?

State law calls for the Washington State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan to include strategies for:

- Improving connections,
- Increasing coordination, and
- Reducing traffic congestion.

It also calls for an assessment of statewide bicycle and pedestrian transportation needs. Additionally, this Plan will satisfy the federal requirement for a long-range bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways plan.

## Who was involved in developing the Plan?

Public participation was instrumental in developing the bicycle and pedestrian element of Washington's Multi-modal Transportation Plan required by state law (RCW 47.06.100).

With assistance and advice from a multi-agency Steering Committee and a State Agency Advisory Team, WSDOT has produced an Updated State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan and a series of six background papers, including a summary of the statewide public opinion survey.

## Where did we preview the Plan?

In addition to the meetings and public hearings directly associated with development of the State Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan, WSDOT staff have reached interest groups and transportation professionals through other forums during plan development including:

- Planning Association of Washington – 3/07
- Washington Recreation and Park Association – 4/07
- Washington State Rideshare Organization – 5/07
- Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity – 5/07
- Wenatchee Council of Governments, Technical Advisory Committee Meeting – 8/07
- Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, Technical Advisory Committee -9/07
- Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association, Annual Conference – 10/07
- Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council – 10/07
- Washington Trails Conference – 10/07
- Washington Sustainability Conference – 10/07
- Puget Sound Regional Council, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee – 2/08
- Columbia River Crossing, Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee – 2/08
- MPO Coordinating Committee Meeting – 2/08
- Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization – 3/08
- Tribal Transportation Planning Organization – 4/08
- Statewide Region Planners' Forums
- Statewide Safe Routes to School Workshops

## What did people tell us?

The following is a summary of the most frequent comments received to date through the Web site, toll-free comment line, and public hearings held across the State. In all, we estimate that we received over 700 individual comments since the project started in February 2007. Many people expressed concerns about specific locations or made recommendations for specific solutions. We captured those comments in the lists of needs included in the Plan.

General Comment Topics	Number
More and better intra-county connections and links to schools, transit and ferries (including trails, signs, ADA, and bike parking) are needed.	147
Highways, arterial streets and roads, bridges, and intersections can be barriers to biking and walking.	94
Mobility education for cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists is needed (including training and public information about laws, safety, and routes).	71
There is a connection between biking and walking with health, sustainability, climate change, and oil prices.	40
There are not enough resources (funding and staff time) dedicated to improving conditions for bicycling and walking.	28
Support innovative bicycle and pedestrian law enforcement programs (i.e. community policing, crosswalk stings, officers on bikes, driver fines)	26
Need better coordination between WSDOT, local agencies, transit providers, and developers; especially in cities.	24
Maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is important (including work zone accommodation).	21
The state and local agencies need to adopt "Complete Streets" policies and strategies.	13
Need more compact walkable development (i.e. transit oriented development, traditional neighborhood development).	10

\*Note: A comment is defined as an individual's written or verbal comments. Listed above are only those categories or general topics receiving 10 or more comments each.

## What did we learn from the data?

**Bicycling and walking for transportation is on the rise.** Overall, biking and walking are increasing in Washington, particularly in cities where housing infill is occurring. Bicycle commuting has increased 75 percent in the past ten years (US Census). Biking and walking currently account for about six percent of statewide commute trips (National Household Transportation Survey). In the Puget Sound Region, bicycling and walking account for nine percent of all trips. In several urban core areas across Washington, bicycling and walking account for 15 percent of all trips (Puget Sound Regional Council). Bicycle touring has also become increasingly popular and contributes more than \$6 million annually to local economies in the state (Bicycle Alliance of Washington).

### **There is the potential for a lot more biking and walking, especially in Washington's cities.**

Over half of all trips in the state are less than three miles, yet 80 percent of these trips are being made by car (National Household Travel Survey). One of the easiest ways to reduce the number of miles we drive and related emissions is reducing these short car trips. Most people drive for short trips because the built environment often makes walking and biking either uninviting or very difficult. A recent federal report found that increased bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility improvements in four pilot communities reduced total vehicle-miles residents traveled by an estimated 156.1 million miles over the course of a year. Based on the reductions reported in miles driven, a reduction of 67,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were projected. Such a reduction in driving, especially for short trips, is an essential ingredient in meeting Washington's goals.



## What does the Plan say?

### **The Plan establishes new goals and performance measures.**

In addition to setting an overarching goal of decreasing collisions by five percent per year while doubling the amount of biking and walking, this Plan also establishes objectives and performance measures in each of the state's five transportation policy areas (as established in state law, RCW 47.01.012) including:

**Preservation:** *In order to ensure no net loss in pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility, when bicycle or pedestrian facilities are removed or additional risk is created, facilities will be replaced or conditions will be improved with alternate, equal or better facilities.*

**Safety:** *Safety funds spent on bicycle and pedestrian safety projects and programs will be focused on addressing known risk factors to reduce the number of fatal and injury collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians (13 percent of all fatal traffic collisions statewide).*

**Mobility:** *Washington State will increase the predictability, consistency and connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.*

**Environment:** *Human powered transportation will be part of Washington State's to improve public health and reduce green house gas emissions.*

**Stewardship:** *Improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system by improving transportation access for all citizens and providing education programs.*

## What needs were identified?

A review of adopted six to ten year local plans and state highways found \$1.6 billion in conceptual solutions to pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility needs. Many of these conceptual solutions have been included in the Plan as maps of the three largest urban areas of the state. Complete lists of statewide needs and conceptual solutions are included in the Plan's Appendices.

### **New policies and initiatives are needed in order to reach our goals.**

Strengthening the project development process, including scoping and project definition, will help to emphasize routine inclusion of all modes in project development vs. relying primarily on stakeholder input to determine appropriate solutions.

The Plan recommends that WSDOT increase coordination with local agencies, transit providers, and developers to identify additional funding for projects not yet in design or construction. Additional resources would enable WSDOT, in some cases, to develop projects with added bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility elements.



## For More Information

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